

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 ROME 07218 041506Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-07
NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00
DODE-00 NSC-05 /064 W
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R 041400Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4364
USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS

S E C R E T ROME 7218

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, MILI, NATO, IT, UK
SUBJ: DUAL-HATting AND RELOCATION OF CINCUSNAVEUR AT AFSOUTH

REF: ROME 6882

1. NATO DIRECTORATE, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAS
FORWARDED TO MINISTER A BRIEFING PAPER BASED ON
PRELIMINARY CONSULTATIONS WITH POL/MIL COUNSELOR ON
APRIL 26. THE PAPER IS INTENDED TO PREPARE MINISTER IN
THE EVENT WE ESCALATE DISCUSSION TO ABASSADORIAL LEVEL.
THE WORKING LEVEL REACTION (WHICH WILL LIKELY BE THAT
ADOPTED BY THE MINISTER) IS THAT WHICH WAS EXPECTED. IN
MECHANICAL AND MILITARY TERMS THERE WOULD NOT BE OBJECTION.
HOWEVER, THE POLITICAL ASPECTS OF THE MOVE WOULD BE THE
CAUSE OF SOME CONCERN. THERE IS FIRST OF ALL, THE
VISIBILITY OF THE ADDED U.S. ELEMENT IN NAPLES THAT WOULD
AGAIN BRING CHARGES FROM THE LEFT THAT ITALY WAS
BEING EXPLOITED AS "THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER" OF THE
ALLIANCE AND THEREFORE WAS ABDICATING ITS SOVEREIGNTY

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AS WELL AS EXPOSING ITSELF AS A PRIME TARGET FOR
WARSAW PACT MISSILES. THEN THERE IS THE HIGHLY
INFLAMMATORY ARGUMENT THAT WOULD BE RAISED BOTH IN THE
PRESS AND THE PARLIAMENT THAT A TWO-HATTED AFSOUTH
WITH NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE SIXTH FLEET
WOULD AUTOMATICALLY INVOLVE THE ALLIANCE AND ITALY IN
ANY UNILATERAL U.S. NAVAL INTERVENTION IN THE EASTERN

MEDITERRANEAN. IN ANY EVENT, POL/MIL COUNSELOR WAS ADVISED, THE ALTERNATION WE ARE CONSIDERING IS NOT PRIMARILY A BILATERAL AFFAIR. IT SHOULD BE DISCUSSED IN THE ALLIANCE IN BOTH POLITICAL AND MILITARY CHANNELS.

2. MOD VICE CHIEF OF STAFF MAININI HAD IN THE INTERIM RECEIVED CONFLICTING INFORMATION THAT THE PROPOSAL HAD BEEN DISCARDED AND THAT IT HAD ALREADY BEEN DECIDED AND WOULD BE IMPLEMENTED. HE ASKED POL/MIL COUNSELOR FOR CONFIRMATION BEFORE BRINGING THE MATTER TO ATTENTION OF MINISTER LATTANZIO. HE WAS INFORMED THAT TO THE EMBASSY'S BEST KNOWLEDGE, THE PROPOSAL, WHICH WAS IN A VERY PRELIMINARY STATE, HAD NEITHER BEEN ABANDONED NOR ACCEPTED. MAININI SAID HE WOULD BRIEF THE MINISTER, AND STRESSED, AS REPORTED REFTEL, THAT WHAT PROBLEMS ITALY MIGHT HAVE WITH THE PROPOSAL WOULD BE POLITICAL RATHER THAN MILITARY. GARDNER

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NNN

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Sent Date: 04-May-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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